



Commonwealth of Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

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Division of Forestry Offers Help for Landowners Managing Storm-Damaged Forests

Frankfort, Ky. (March 29, 2012)– Kentucky's forests have suffered extensive damage over the last few years due to strong winds, ice, snow and most recently, tornadoes. These storms have caused damage by uprooting, wounding, bending and breaking trees.

"Our forests are resilient and will recover from damage as new seedlings sprout and additional seedlings are planted," said Leah MacSwords, director for the Kentucky Division of Forestry (KDF). "How fast the forest recovers can be influenced by good forestry practices such as proper harvesting of damaged trees, removal of downed trees, and control of invasive plants that assault the open areas."

To help return damaged forests to a productive status, forestry officials offer the following guidance to landowners:

Assess the damage –While it is important to consider safety and watch for overhanging limbs and fallen trees, landowners should walk their property and note the extent of damage. Types of damage include breakage, uprooted trees, major wounds and bent trees. If trees are to be salvaged, landowners should be aware that determining the value and marketability of the timber is a difficult task and they should consult with a professional forester when assessing the damage.

Understand the salvage process –For landowners with extensive damage to their forests, the timber will likely remain valuable and merchantable over the next year. If there is sufficient quantity as well as quality of timber, it is advisable to work with a professional forester to mark the salvage as a timber sale and seek competitive bids for the best price. A timber sales contract to specify how the trees will be marked and priced, how the payment is to be made, and where the property boundaries are located is always advisable.

Use good forestry practices –Working with damaged forests gives the landowner an opportunity to reassess management goals. Woodlands can be managed for timber, wildlife habitat, water quality and/or recreation. A forester can assist a landowner with these goals by making appropriate recommendations for removal and regeneration of certain species. Good forestry practices should also be used while logging in order to prevent additional damage to trees, soil and water resources. A trained logger, or Kentucky Master Logger, will know the proper techniques for harvesting.

Get assistance –The best advice for a landowner with damaged forests is to enlist the help of a professional forester. A professional forester will help determine cutting specifications, provide examples of timber sales contracts and monitor the harvesting process. Landowners should also contact their local Farm Service Agency for information about disaster assistance programs including the Emergency Forest Restoration Program that may provide financial assistance to restore the forests.

For assistance from your local forester about storm-damaged forests, please contact the Division of Forestry at 1-800-866-0555 or visit the division's website at: <http://forestry.ky.gov/LandownerServices/Pages/StormDamageInformation.aspx>.

For a listing of consulting foresters in Kentucky, visit <http://kacf.org/>.

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